linkages/sponsorships. Option of import of coal is also now available.

Steps to check exploitation of Child Labourer

754. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of children employed as child labourers and how many of them are in hazardous occupations;

(b) occupations in which they are mostly employed;

(c) whether they are properly paid or are exploited by the employers;

(d) if so, steps Government intend to take to check exploitation;

(e) steps Government propose to take to provide healthy environment at service place to provide educational facilities, job security and health services; and

(f) whether Government have plans to check child labour, if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) As per 1981 Census, India has a Child Labour population of 13.65 million. However, as per 43rd Round of the National Sample Survey, 1987 the number of child labour is estimated at 17.02 million. The 1991 Census data is yet to be released. While occupation-wise number of child labour is not available, it is estimated that the number of children working in hazardous occupations is around 2.00 million.

(c) to (f) The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 prohibits the employment of children below 14 years of age in specific occupations and processes contained in parts A & B of the Schedule to Section 3 of the Act. In occupation where employment of children is not prohibited, the Act provides for various reliefs to the working children. Enforcement machinery at the Central & State level exists to enforce the provisions of the Act. Employers are liable to be prosecuted for violations of the provisions of the Act. Government of India monitors the enforcement of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. Government is presently engaged in implementing a programme under the National Child Labour Project Scheme to progressively remove 2 million children working in hazardous occupations and rehabilitate them through education and by providing them with nutrition, health care and monthly stipends. Presently around 1.5 lakh children are being covered through 76 projects in the 11 most child labour endemic States of the country. Apart from this, a massive awareness generation compaign has also been launched to sensitize the society against the practice of child labour at the national and regional levels. In addition, 133 districts have been funded to carry out awareness generation compaigns against the practice of child labour.

123 districts have also been sanctioned funds to conduct surveys to identify child labour hazard intensity wise for priority coverage of the worst affected children.

Decrease in export of marine products

755. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that marine product exports have declined during 1995-96 as compared to the previous year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that some of the subsidy schemes like HSD Oil subsidy extended to deep sea fishing vessels for export is withdrawn; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and

(b) Yes, Sir. The reasons for decline in the exports of marine products are as follows:—

(i) Lesser production from shrimp culture farms due to the observance of crop holiday.

(ii) Area under shrimp farming could not increase due to non-availability of financial support from commercial banks for aquaculture activities and on account of a ban imposed by the Supreme Court on further expansion of aquaculture.

(iii) Internal problems in Japan led to a decrease in the imports of shrimp.

(iv) Poor landings of commercially valuable fishes from the Upper West Coast of India led to a decline in exports to South East Asian market.

(v) The unit value realisation for Frozen Shrimp and Frozen Fish was lower than the preceding year.

(c) The Government has kept the HSD Oil Subsidy Scheme in abeyance.

(d) The contribution of deep sea fishing vessels to the export effort has been meagre.

Import and export of Electronic Items

756. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of electronic items can be imported or exported under the Exim policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the importers of these items have to fulfil the conditions pertaining to export;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the target fixed in this regard for 1995-96

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (e): While under the current Export and Import Policy there is no restriction on export of electronic items, importability of such items is indicated itemwise in the ITC (HC) Classifications of Export and Import items. The question of imposing export obligation arises only when duty-free imports are made under Export Promotion Schemes and no specific targets can be fixed in this regard.

Protection of Farm Land from Non-Farm use

757. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to suggestions made by noted agriculturists of the country that food needs of mushrooming population of country can be met in case farm lands are protected from non-farm use and conservation of ground water resources;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to take note of these valuable suggestions and take measures to implement same;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (e) The Government is aware and concerned about protection of agricultural land and conservation of water resources for increasing production of agricultural commodities in general, and foodgrains in particular to meet the increasing demand of the growing popultion. Land being a State subject the necessary steps for protection of farmland from non-farm use are taken by the States. However, the Government of India have been repeatedly impressing upon all the States & Union Territories to protect good agricultural land from being diverted to non-agricultural